

BRYAN STEIL
1ST DISTRICT, WISCONSIN

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES

COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION
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May 31, 2022

The Honorable Denis Richard McDonough
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
801 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20420

The Honorable Chiquita Brooks-LaSure
Administrator
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244

Dear Secretary McDonough and Administrator Brooks-LaSure:

I write to share my extreme concern regarding a recent investigative report published by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel that exposes the mistreatment of veterans at the state-run Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove, in Wisconsin's First Congressional district.¹

The article highlights how the state-run facility in Union Grove ranks among the worst in the country and has numerous federal violations. The investigative report shares horrible stories of residents at the Union Grove home not being given water, residents being given medication by mistake, residents suffering abuse, and more. I trust you agree that this kind of treatment of our veterans is unacceptable. Our veterans deserve the highest quality of care, and this level of mistreatment cannot be tolerated.

The quality of care at this facility has long been a concern of mine and of the people of Wisconsin's First Congressional District. For additional background, back in 2020, I made multiple inquiries highlighting issues the Union Grove home was facing regarding cases and deaths of veterans infected with COVID-19. At that time, I wrote the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) asking for a review of this facility. At that time my office was then notified that federal officials offered consultation and staffing assistance to veterans' home at Union Grove, but that offer of assistance was declined. Given that staffing levels have long been, and continues to be, a major concern at the facility, I then sent a subsequent letter to the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) asking why this assistance was turned down from the VA.

It is now abundantly clear that the veteran's home in Union Grove has much larger issues than even I and the people who reached out to me were reporting in 2020.

While I am aware that this is a state-run facility, I ask you to review the concerns outlined in the article and take all appropriate action necessary to ensure the proper treatment of veterans in the Wisconsin Veterans Home at Union Grove.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter and everything you do to take care for America's heroes.

Sincerely,

BRYAN STEIL
Member of Congress

¹ <https://www.jsonline.com/restricted/?return=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.jsonline.com%2Fdepth%2Fnews%2Finvestigations%2Freports%2F2022%2F05%2F23%2Fwisconsin-veterans-nursing-home-union-grove-racine-county-among-worst-nation%2F7417676001%2F>